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Chairman: Mr. MacKay ..... (New Zealand)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Kuznetsov

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 108: Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 (*continued*)

***Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives, authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council* (A/59/534 and A/59/569)**

1. **Mr. Sach** (Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives, authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/59/534), said that the United Nations advance team in the Sudan had been established as a special political mission pursuant to Security Council resolution 1547 (2004) for an initial period of three months. The resource requirements for the initial phase of the mission had been met through utilization of the provision for special political missions appropriated under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for 2004-2005.

2. By its resolution 1556 (2004), the Security Council had extended the mandate of the mission for a further 90 days until 10 December 2004 and had requested the Secretary-General to incorporate into that mission contingency planning for the Darfur region. The report before the Committee contained the proposed resource requirements of the United Nations advance team in the Sudan for the three-month extension from 11 September to 10 December 2004, which amounted to $21,008,100 net. Those requirements would cover the costs of 10 military advisers, 4 civilian police advisers and 419 civilian posts, 215 of which were for the Darfur component.

3. An amount of approximately $16,400,000 had been approved for the initial phase of the mission, of which around $1 million remained unencumbered. In addition, an unassigned balance of $3,002,600 remained for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005. The new requirements would be met partly from those amounts. The General Assembly was requested to take the action detailed in paragraph 15 of the report.

4. **Mr. Kuznetsov** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (A/59/569), pointed out that the requirements for the period from 11 September to 10 December 2004 did not relate merely to a continuation of the mission's initial activities. The incorporation of Darfur had added a significant operational and political dimension and, in fact, Darfur represented the largest single component, totalling almost $13 million.

5. The Secretary-General's request and the Advisory Committee's report were limited to the consideration of the advance team as a special political mission. Utilization of the commitment authority approved pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/233 to facilitate the rapid deployment of a possible peace support operation would be dealt with by ACABQ if a proposed budget for a peacekeeping operation in the Sudan was submitted by the Secretary-General.

6. The Advisory Committee's report was basically informational and covered military and police personnel, as well as civilian personnel and operational costs. In the section entitled "Other matters", the Committee conveyed information about humanitarian activities, the role of the African Union and the status of mission agreement. As indicated in paragraph 21, the Advisory Committee had exchanged views with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the structure of the mission and would revert to that issue in the light of the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General on the management structure of all peacekeeping operations.

7. In conclusion, he said that the Advisory Committee was recommending that the General Assembly should approve the Secretary-General's proposal as contained in document A/59/569.

8. **Mr. Zellenrath** (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the candidate countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey), the stabilization and association process countries (Albania, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and, in addition, Iceland and Norway, said that the European Union had expressed its grave concern about the situation in the Sudan on a number of occasions. It was fully committed to resolving the conflict as a matter of great priority and had therefore

welcomed Security Council resolutions 1547 (2004) and 1556 (2004) and the outcome of the meeting in Nairobi.

9. A comprehensive peace agreement to end the North-South conflict would contribute towards peace and security for the whole of the Sudan and could only have a positive impact on the Darfur crisis. Consequently, the work of the advance team was of great importance to the European Union, particularly since its mandate had been extended to cover contingency planning in the Darfur region and support for the African Union's mission in Darfur.

10. In order to manage its expanded mandate effectively, the advance team must be provided with the necessary resources. The European Union accepted the 19 additional positions for the core mandate and the 215 new positions for the Darfur component. Therefore, like ACABQ, it supported the Secretary-General's proposals.

11. **Mr. Al-Muthafar** (Qatar), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, welcomed the submission of the resource requirements for the United Nations advance team in the Sudan and, in that connection, recalled that, in its resolution 1556 (2004), the Security Council had extended the mandate of the advance team for a period of 90 days. He took note of the Secretary-General's proposal to meet part of the requirements by utilizing the unencumbered balance from the initial phase of the mission. The Group of 77 and China supported the proposal set out in paragraph 15, subparagraphs (a) to (d), of document A/59/534 and noted that the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should approve that proposal.

12. **Ms. Udo** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that her delegation wished to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The African Group supported the proposal of the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 15, subparagraphs (a) to (d), of his report and endorsed the recommendation of ACABQ contained in paragraph 22 of its related report. It also welcomed the establishment of a liaison office at Addis Ababa, which would facilitate close cooperation between the United Nations and the regional players involved in the ongoing peace process.

13. Her delegation had taken note of the information on the status of the consolidated appeal for the Sudan assistance programme contained in annexes III and IV of the report of the Advisory Committee and expressed its appreciation to the donor community. The volume of pledges and contributions already received was encouraging, but there was a need for more assistance and the African Group therefore wished to appeal for further contributions. The United Nations had already revised its humanitarian requirements for Darfur and other parts of the Sudan on more than one occasion.

14. Referring to the comments made by ACABQ in paragraph 21 of its report, she said that any consideration of the staffing structures of missions should be based on the specificities, complexities and mandates of each individual mission.

15. **Mr. Dutton** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of New Zealand, said that the Governments of Australia and New Zealand continued to be gravely concerned about the ongoing conflicts in the Sudan and the deteriorating humanitarian and human rights situation. He urged the Security Council to continue its efforts to resolve those conflicts and to maintain strong pressure on all parties concerned to protect civilians and to work constructively towards a comprehensive, peaceful settlement. In that connection, the signing of the memorandum of understanding in Nairobi and the adoption of Security Council resolution 1574 (2004) were welcome developments. The Governments of Australia and New Zealand were contributing to international efforts to resolve the crisis in the Sudan through the provision of substantial funding for United Nations operations and support for the African Union's activities.

16. The advance mission in the Sudan had a vital role to play in promoting the establishment of peace and security, ensuring effective humanitarian relief and providing support to the African Union in the planning and assessment of its mission in Darfur. The innovative idea of establishing an advance team to help prepare for an expected peacekeeping mission was a welcome improvement to the planning and deployment process and had already demonstrated its value. Accordingly, his delegation and that of New Zealand fully supported the provision of the necessary funds for the period from 11 September to 10 December 2004. During informal consultations, additional information on the mission's structure would be appreciated, since a streamlined structure and a clear chain of command would be essential to the achievement of its challenging objectives.

17. **Mr. Ballah** (Sudan) endorsed the statements made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group. He expressed his delegation's gratitude for the efforts of the United Nations advance team and welcomed the spirit of cooperation among the team, the Sudanese Government, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs. The Sudanese Government had pursued the conclusion of a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations concerning the relationship between the Government and the mission and was committed to providing the facilities necessary to enable it to carry out its work.

18. He supported the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report, in particular the proposal contained in paragraph 15, subparagraphs (a) to (d). However, in spite of its pledges to support the African Union's mission in Darfur, the international community had failed to honour its logistical and financial commitments. He appealed to Member States that had already made pledges to fulfil them as soon as possible in order to avoid deployment delays.

19. **Mr. Mumbey-Wafula** (Uganda) endorsed the remarks made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group and the representative of the Sudan. The United Nations advance team in the Sudan was of critical importance to Uganda because the 21-year war in the Sudan had affected the whole region. The meetings in Nairobi and Kampala bore witness to the urgent need to redouble efforts to restore peace to the Sudan and the surrounding region, and the successful outcome of the Nairobi meeting clearly demonstrated the will of the Sudanese Government and the warring factions to sustain the momentum of the Machakos Protocol and the Naivasha process. Nevertheless, much still remained to be done.

20. In order to uphold the commitment of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative and lay the foundation for a lasting peace, the international community must continue to lend its support to efforts on the ground. Consequently, his delegation supported the Secretary-General's request for $21,008,100 net to cover the expansion of the advance team's core component, the establishment of field offices and the additional requirements for Darfur. It was also in favour of the establishment of a liaison office in Addis Ababa and hoped that the team's management structure would continue to evolve to reflect changing needs on the ground.

21. Lastly, turning to the consolidated appeal for the Sudan assistance programme, he welcomed the information contained in annexes III and IV of the Advisory Committee's report. He expressed his appreciation to the donor community and encouraged Norway to pursue its efforts to organize a donor conference for development assistance.

22. **Mr. Elnaggar** (Egypt) said that his delegation wished to associate itself with the statements made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group and the representative of Sudan. In view of the important role of the United Nations advance team in the Sudan in furthering the peace process, his delegation fully supported the request contained in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report.

23. With regard to the consolidated appeal, his delegation urged States that had already made pledges to continue their support in order to alleviate the suffering of the Sudanese population and achieve reconciliation within the framework of the memorandum of understanding and further political dialogue.

24. **Ms. Taylor Roberts** (Jamaica) said that her delegation wished to associate itself with the statements made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group. Her delegation supported the work of the United Nations advance team and therefore supported the proposal contained in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report.

25. The situation in the Sudan was extremely complex, involving deep-seated historical differences, and it was clear that a military response alone would not be adequate. The events in Darfur had further complicated the situation and, in that connection, her delegation supported the proposal that contingency planning for the Darfur region should be incorporated into the mandate of the advance team. A negotiated political settlement was the only sensible way to resolve the crisis.

26. While some progress had been made in the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, much still remained to be done. She commended the African Union for its role and encouraged the Sudanese Government and all the parties concerned to make a concerted effort to address the problems and to make a commitment to a peaceful settlement.

27. **Ms. Goicochea** (Cuba) endorsed the comments made by all those who had expressed their support for the Secretary-General's proposed resource requirements.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.